CLOUD

by Noujou Junichi

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Cloud Ch 6

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鞍生人
—くらうど—

鞍生人、翔子……運命の邂逅

level.6 雲

能條純一

The ticket gates at the Tokyo Metro System have suddenly begun behaving abnormally. The source of the abnormality is malicious hacking of their network. The prime suspect is a man called "Cloud". Does he truly intend to "create a kingdom above the clouds"? Meanwhile, Public Safety Detective Sudou and Mizoguchi Shouko of the Japanese Security Coordination Center are trying to capture him us ng their own methods. In the midst of these occurances, Shouko has received messages from Cloud and the now heads to Koiwa station alone. There, the two meet, but...

CLOUD DECLARES WAR AGAINST THE EMPTY WORLD. WHAT IS HE PLANNING...?

3

HE...

THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME CLOUD AND I MET.

DIDN'T SEEM TO CARE THAT I WAS FOLLOWING HIM.

THAT'S THE IMPRESSION I GOT FROM WATCHING HIS BACK.

CLOUD-KUN... WILL WE MEET AGAIN?!

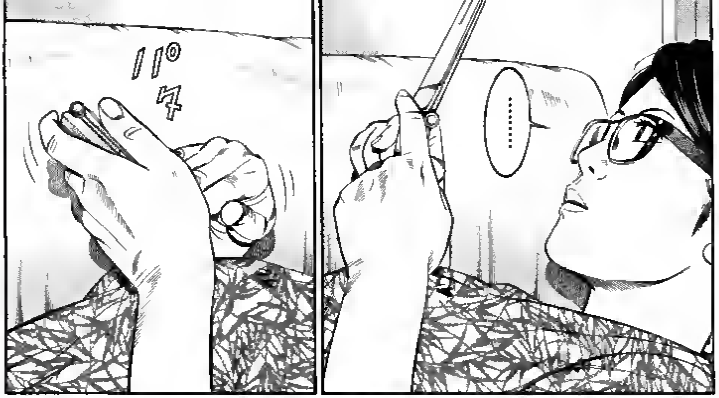
WILL WE MEET AGAIN?

ton

I CAN'T STAND THIS! LET ME GO BACK TO WORK ALREADY! MY BOSS'S GONNA YELL AT ME AGAIN!
THIS IS ARBITRARY DETENTION! FOR GOD'S SAKE. ALL I DID WAS BORROW A SMARTPHONE!

I TOLD YOU, IT'S NOT ARBITRARY DETENTION! WE JUST WANT TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS.
THE MAN WHO GAVE YOU THE SMARTPHONE... CAN YOU TELL US WHAT HE LOOKED LIKE?
REALLY ..?
HUH?
MA'AM... TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THE INVESTIGATOR HERE IS A BIG FAN OF CABARET.
IF YOU HELP US OUT, HE'LL GO SEE YOU AT THE CABARET EVERYDAY!
RIGHT?

That's awesome!
I'VE HAD FEWER CLIENTS LATELY AND MY BOSS WON'T SHUT UP ABOUT IT!
HMM... LET'S SEE. HIS FACE WAS SHAPED LIKE NUMBER 2. IT WAS SORT OF OVAL AND IT STUCK OUT A BIT.
YOU BAS—
WELL, THEN, LET'S GET STARTED! WHICH OF THESE FACES MOST RESEMBLES THE CONTOUR OF THE MAN'S FACE?
...LIKE NUMBER 5!
HE HAD LONG HAIR AND IT DROOPED OVER HIS EYES...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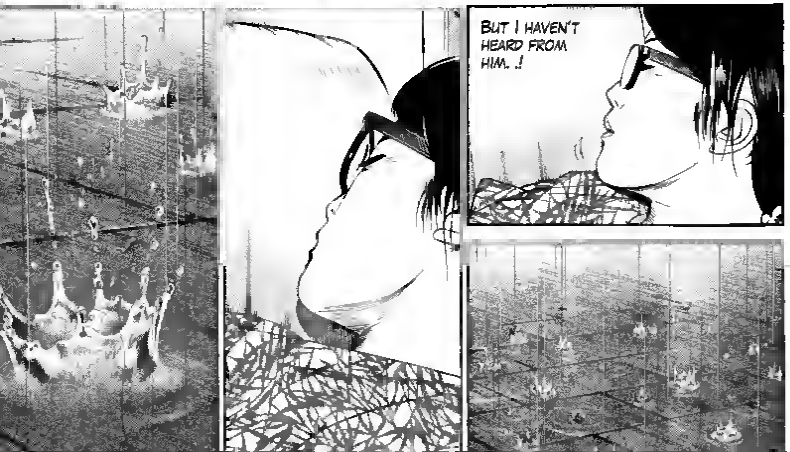
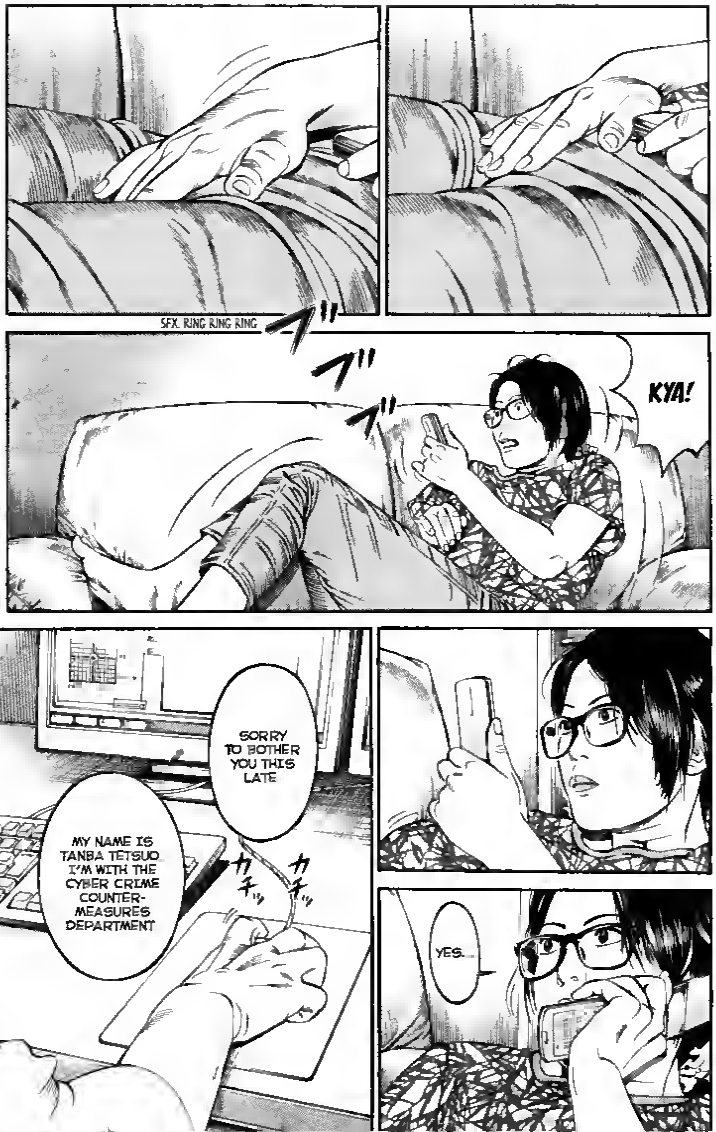
SINCE THEN, I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR HIM TO CONTACT ME...
TODAY, I MET CLOUD FOR THE FIRST TIME.


BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HIM..!


SFX RING RING RING
KYA!
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU THIS LATE
MY NAME IS TANBA TETSUO I'M WITH THE CYBER CRIME COUNTER-MEASURES DEPARTMENT
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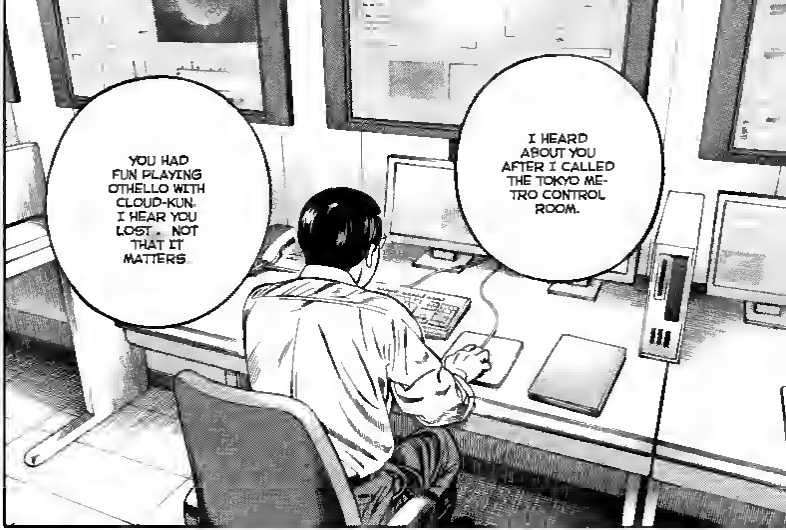
カチッ
YES.


I HEARD ABOUT YOU AFTER I CALLED THE TOKYO METRO CONTROL ROOM.
YOU HAD FUN PLAYING OTHELLO WITH CLOUD-KUN. I HEAR YOU LOST. NOT THAT IT MATTERS.

MIZOGUCHI SHOUKO-SAN. YOU WENT TO KOIWA STATION?
THE DISTRICT WITH "NO GRAVES" KOIWA, RIGHT?! I HEARD FROM A WORKMATE OF YOURS...
AND YOU MET *CLOUD*... DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT DID HE LOOK LIKE? TO BE HONEST, I ALREADY PUT TOGETHER A COMPOSITE IMAGE.
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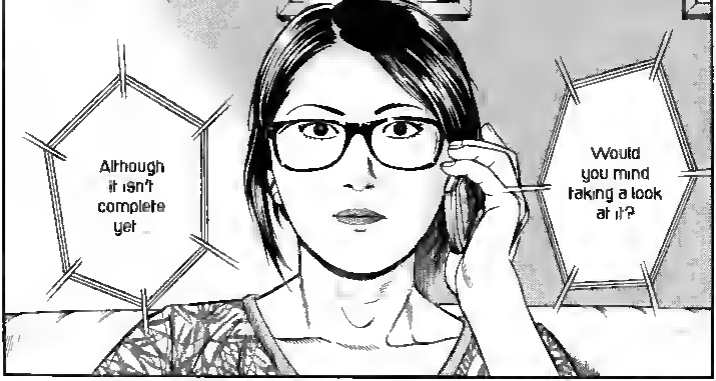
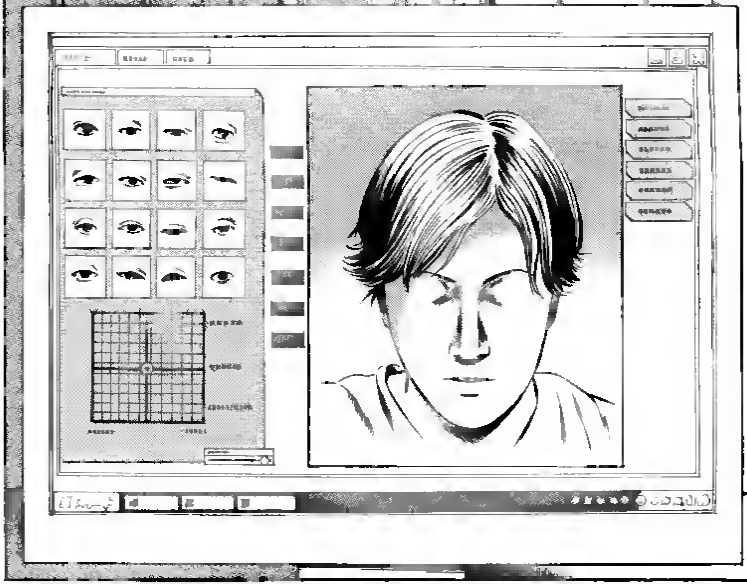
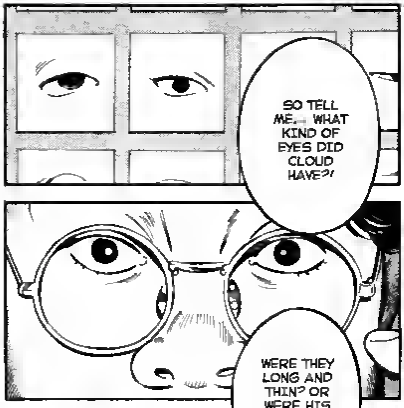
"!
カチ

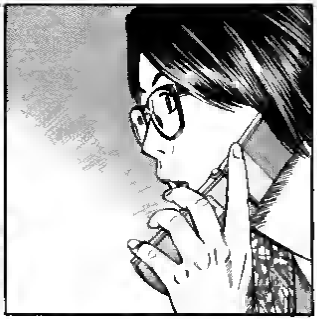

Although it isn't complete yet
Would you mind taking a look at it?

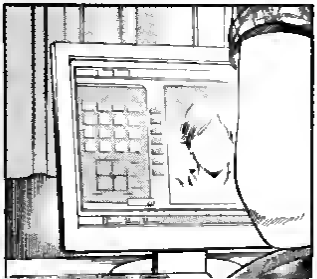
Please tell me what do Cloud-kun's eyes look like?
I just can't quite grasp what he really looks like

ANYWAY, FOR NOW I'LL SEND YOU THE IN-COMPLETE VERSION.
I'VE ALREADY LOOKED UP YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS, SO JUST CONFIRM THAT YOU RECEIVED IT.
I WOULDN'T KNOW. I'M NEVER MET CLOUD.

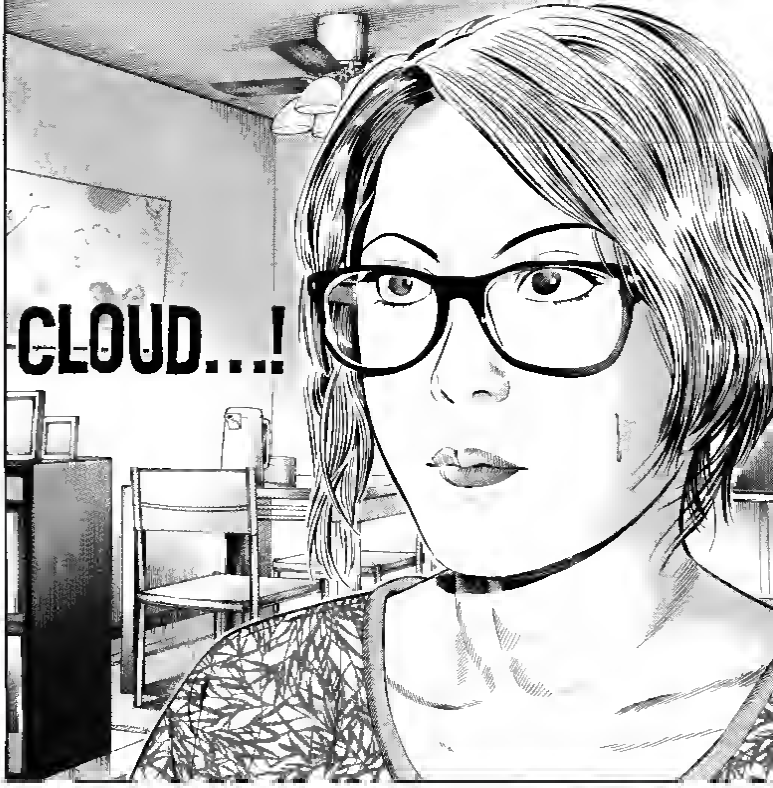


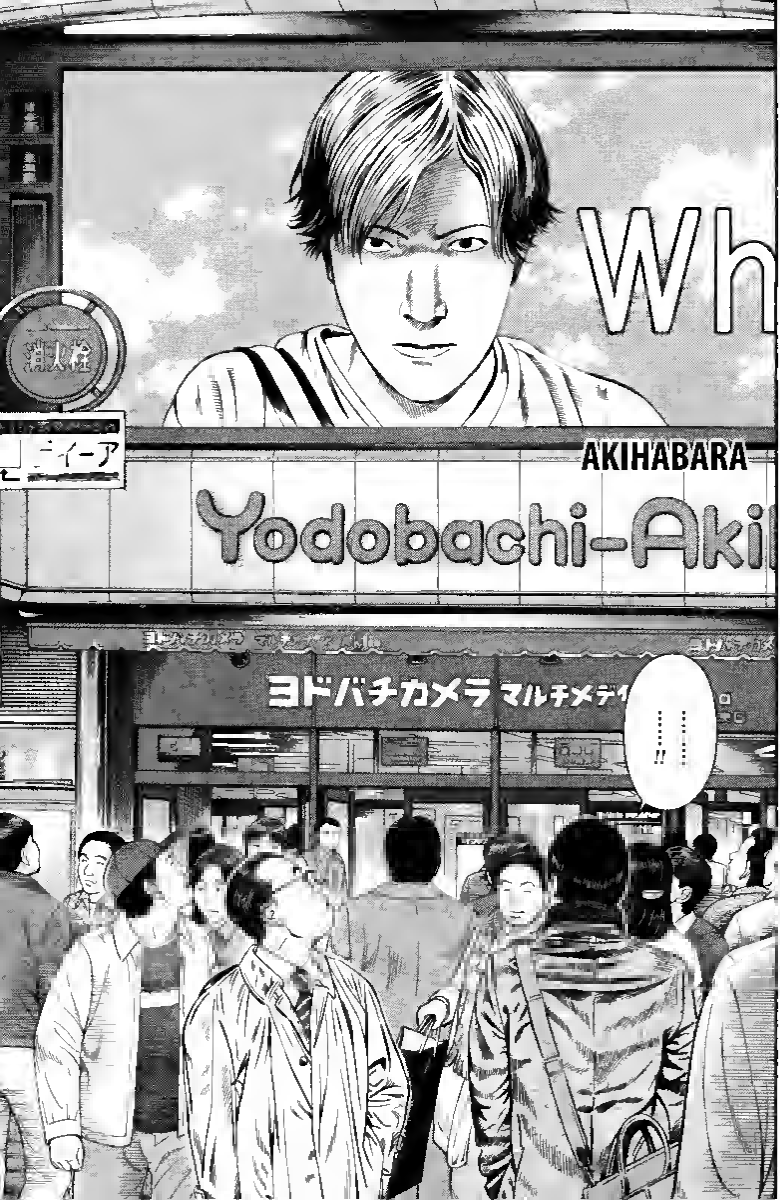

SO TELL ME... WHAT KIND OF EYES DID CLOUD HAVE?!
WERE THEY LONG AND THIN? OR WERE HIS IRISES BIG AND ROUND?





HMMM~ IS THAT SO? WELL LET'S SAY HE HAD EYES LIKE THESE
I JUST TOLD YOU... I'VE NEVER...
カチ
カチ
HMM, NOT QUITE... HOW ABOUT THESE? OR MAYBE... MAYBE THESE...!
HMM? YOU'RE QUIET ALL OF A SUDDEN. THESE ARE THE EYES, RIGHT? WE HAVE A MATCH! MIZOGUCHI SHOUKO-SAN, IT'S THESE EYES, RIGHT?


CLOUD...!


Wh
AKIHABARA
Yodobachi-Aki
ヨドバチカメラ マルチメディ
……
!!

Who?

"WHO?" WHAT DO YOU MEAN "WHO"? WHO IS THAT?
IS THERE A NEW GAME COMING OUT OR...

Who?

TANBA! LET ME ASK YOU ONCE MORE! WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THIS?

LIKE I SAID... I WANT TO FIGURE OUT CLOUD'S PERSONALITY!
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE DOING THIS?! WHAT CAN YOU LEARN ABOUT HIM THIS WAY?

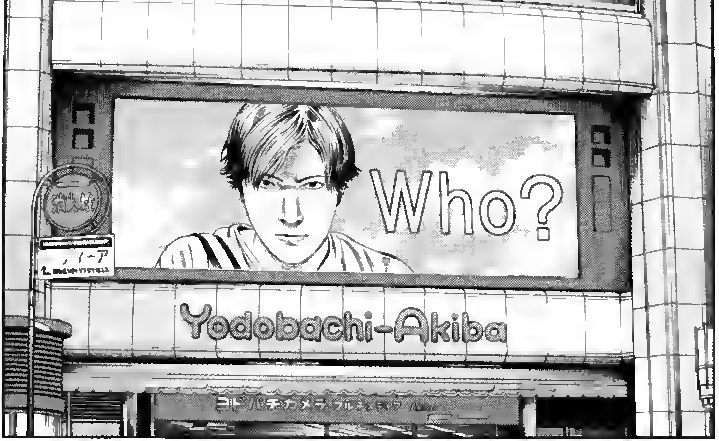
CLOUD WILL DEFINITELY KNOW ABOUT THAT SCREEN
HOW WILL HE REACT?!
Who?

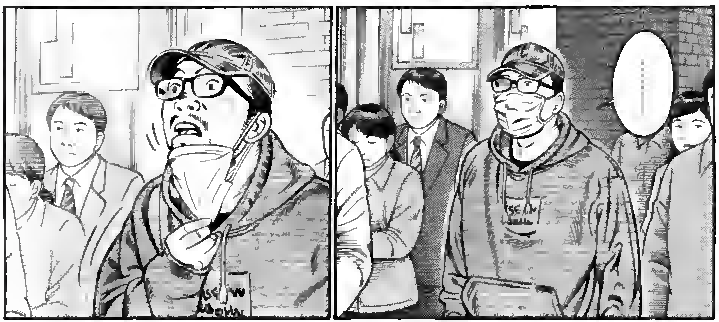
IF YOU'RE TAKING ON AN ANDROID, YOU HAVE TO CHECK ITS SETTINGS TO FIND ITS WEAKNESS!

CHIEF! DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO LEAVE CLOUD TO ME?!

IF ONLY IT WERE THAT EASY...
IN OTHER WORDS, CLOUD'S REACTION WILL TELL US WHAT HIS BRAIN'S SETTINGS ARE... RIGHT?

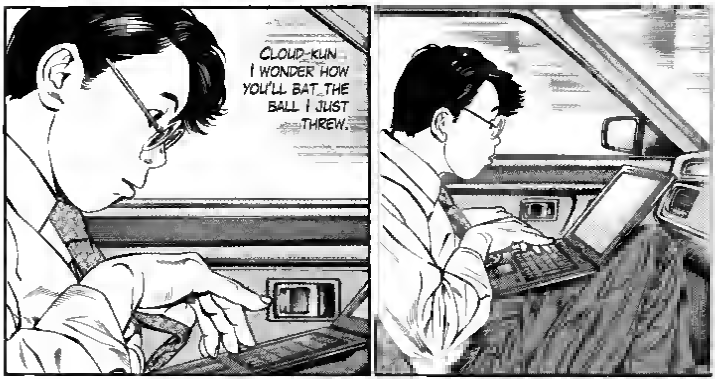
IT DOES! IT LOOKS JUST LIKE HIM! I'M CONFIDENT IN MY ABILITY TO TRACK HIM DOWN.
BUT REALLY... DOES THE FACIAL COMPOSITE EVEN LOOK LIKE CLOUD?
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH! LET'S GO BACK TO THE POLICE OFFICE


Who?
Yodobachi-Akiba



THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING! THE SCREEN JUST... CHANGED!

I AM THE FAMOUS HACKER.


CLOUD-KUN I WONDER HOW YOU'LL BAT THE BALL I JUST THREW.

I AM THE FAMOUS HACKER.

!!

I APOLOGIZE FOR CALLING YOU OUT SO SUDDENLY.
SUDOU-SAN...

トーン

THAT'S WHAT THE CYBER CRIME COUNTER MEASURES DEPARTMENT HAS LAID OUT FOR CLOUD.
I UNDER-STAND. IT'S ABOUT AURORA VISION IN AKIHABARA, RIGHT?
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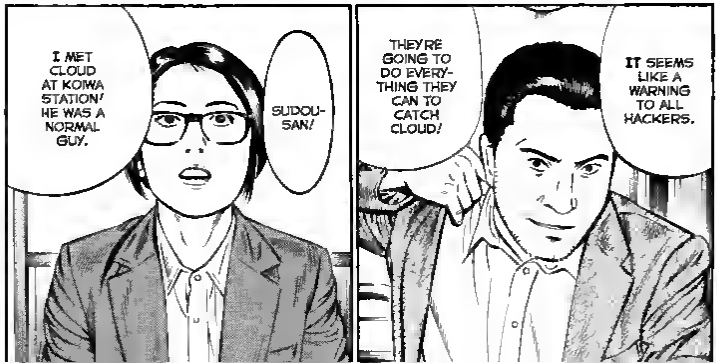
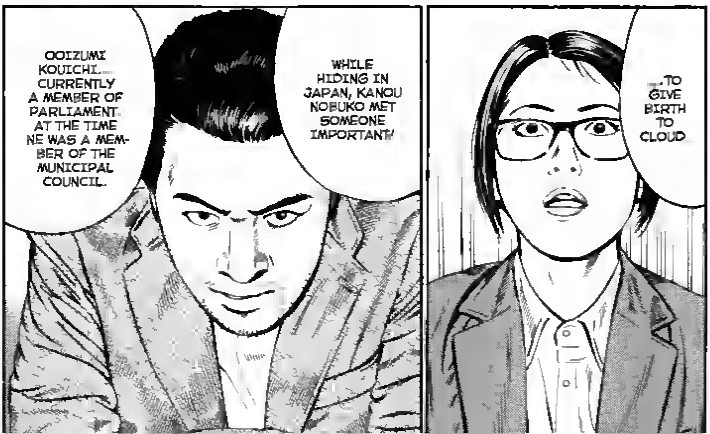
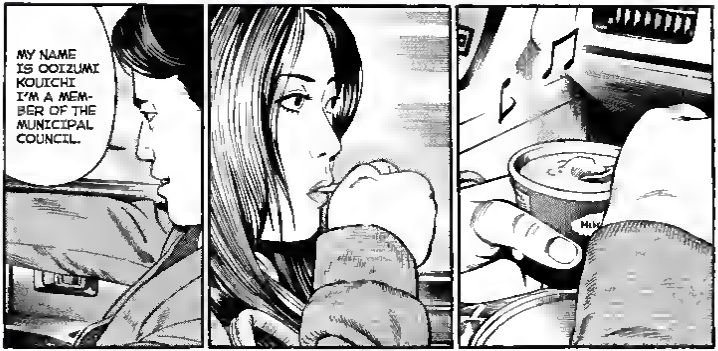
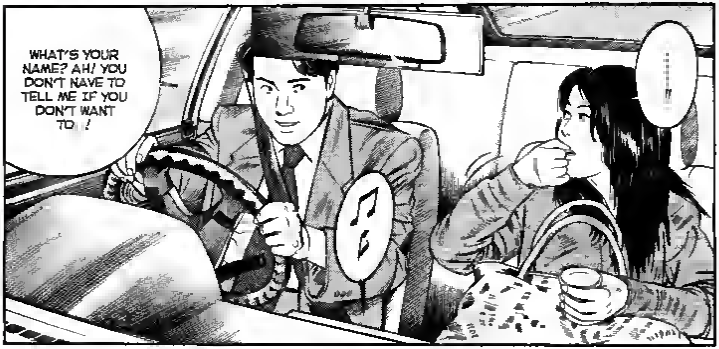

I MET CLOUD AT KOIWA STATION! HE WAS A NORMAL GUY.
SUDOU-SAN!
THEY'RE GOING TO DO EVERY-THING THEY CAN TO CATCH CLOUD!
IT SEEMS LIKE A WARNING TO ALL HACKERS.

THIS WORLD IS EMPTY... SO I CAN MAKE SOME MISCHIEF, RIGHT? SO LONG AS IT'S FUN..

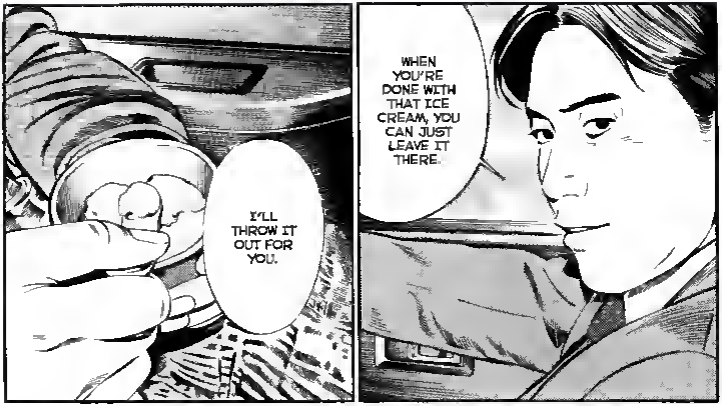
PLEASE TELL ME! WHY IS CLOUD SO ANTI-ESTABLISH-MENT?
24 YEARS AGO, CLOUD'S MOTHER, KANOU NOBUKO CAME TO JAPAN WITH A COUNTER-FEIT PASSPORT...

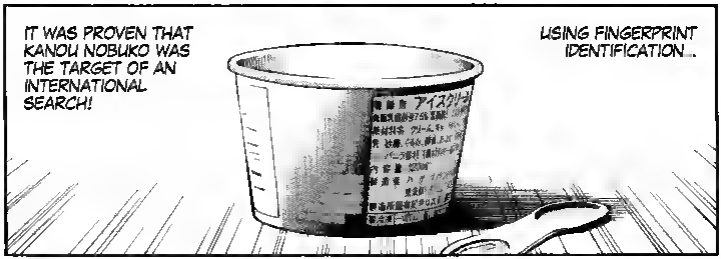

OOIZUMI KOUICHI... CURRENTLY A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. AT THE TIME HE WAS A MEM-BER OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.
WHILE HIDING IN JAPAN, KANOU NOBUKO MET SOMEONE IMPORTANT.
...TO GIVE BIRTH TO CLOUD


MY NAME IS OOIZUMI KOUICHI I'M A MEMBER OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.


WHAT'S YOUR NAME? AH! YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME IF YOU DON'T WANT TO. !

I HOPE YOU LIKE YOUR ICE CREAM. EVEN IF IT MELTS, IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU SHOULD WASTE, YOU KNOW?
OOIZUMI KOUICHI SOLD KANOU NOBUKO OUT TO THE AUTHORITIES SO HE COULD MAKE HIS DEBUT INTO NATIONAL POLITICS!


I'LL THROW IT OUT FOR YOU.
WHEN YOU'RE DONE WITH THAT ICE CREAM, YOU CAN JUST LEAVE IT THERE.


IT WAS PROVEN THAT KANOU NOBUKO WAS THE TARGET OF AN INTERNATIONAL SEARCH!
USING FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION...

I'M FROM THE POST OFFICE!!
コン コン
I HAVE A TELEGRAM FOR YOU!
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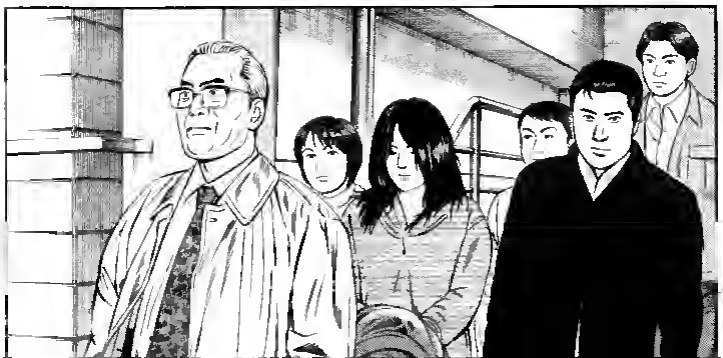
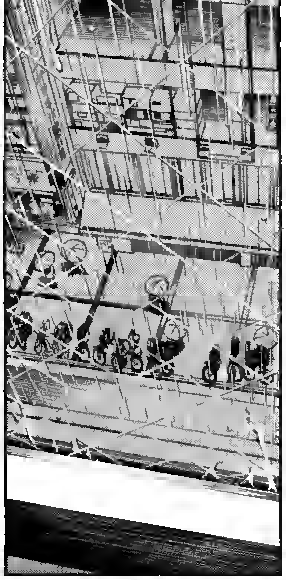
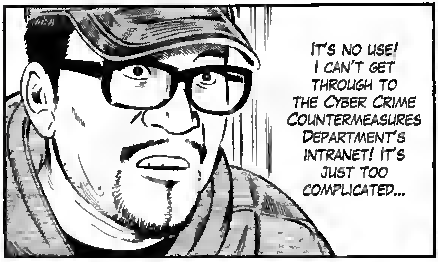
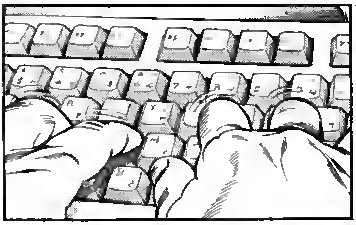
AT THE TIME, I HAD JUST JOINED THE POLICE FORCE AS A DETECTIVE
THE ONE STANDING BESIDE KANOU NOBUKO AS SHE WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY... WAS ME!



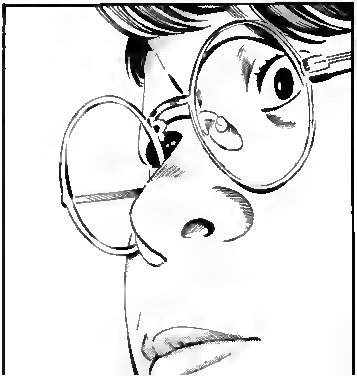
THAT WAS WHEN KANOU NOBUKO CAUGHT SIGHT OF HIM... THAT MAN... OOIZUMI KOUICHI!!
EVERY-THING!!
IMMEDIATELY, KANOU NOBUKO UNDERSTOOD EVERYTHING.

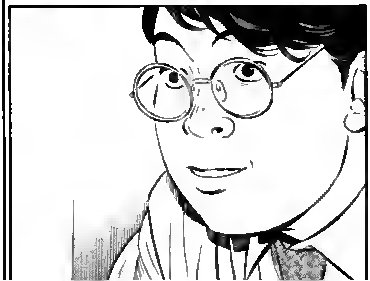


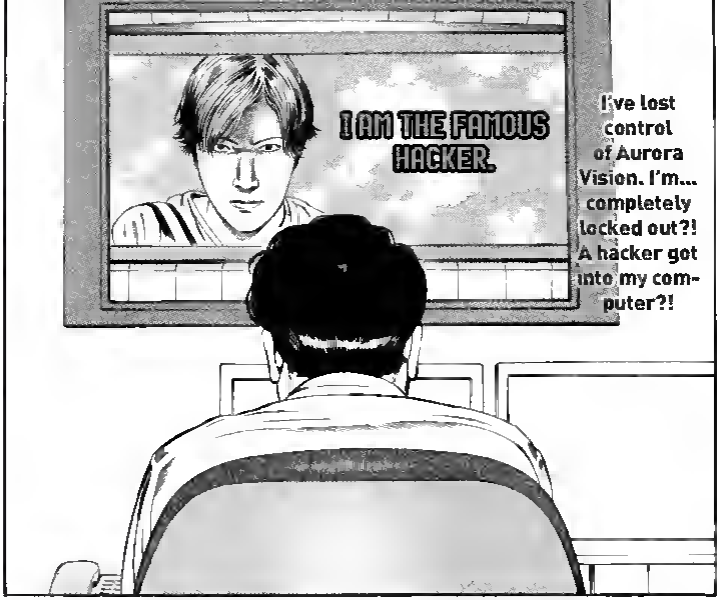

IT'S NO USE! I CAN'T GET THROUGH TO THE CYBER CRIME COUNTERMEASURES DEPARTMENT'S INTRANET! IT'S JUST TOO COMPLICATED...

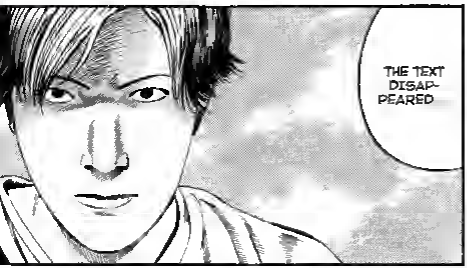


YOU WON'T BREAK THROUGH MY LOCKS THAT EASILY! . .COME ON! SHOW ME WHAT YOU CAN DO!






I AM THE FAMOUS HACKER.
I've lost control of Aurora Vision. I'm... completely locked out?! A hacker got into my computer?!


THE TEXT DISAPPEARED

THE FACE IS FADING ONLY THE MOUTH IS LEFT
WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW... CLOUD-KUN?

IT'S YOU! CLOUD!

Sunday —
OKI

トン

HELL
歡迎
愛客國際

. . . .

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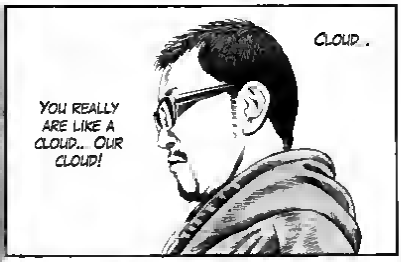
ガタン


CLOUD .
YOU REALLY ARE LIKE A CLOUD.. OUR CLOUD!

ERASING THE TEXT...
ERASING THE FACE...
LEAVING JUST THE MOUTH...
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
TO SEND
ALL OF US
A MESSAGE!
AND THEN
ANIMATING
THOSE LIPS...
Yodobachi-Akiba

Let's play on top of the clouds...
Let's begin the revolution.
AOKI

NEXT CHAPTER, THE NEW VOLUME BEGINS!!
CLOUD
Level 5 Emotion
To be continued

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